

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The present amendment is submitted in response to the Office Action dated October 4, 2007, which set a three-month period for response. Filed herewith is a Request for a One-month Extension of Time, making this amendment due by February 4, 2008.

Claims 14, 18-20, and 22-26 are pending in the application.

In the Office Action, claim 24 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claims 14-17, 20, 24, and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by DE 4130989 to Linde et al. Claims 14 and 18-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,629,026 to Rosell. Claims 14, 15, 20, 24, and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by GB 2,328,191 to Buchan. Claims 14-17 and 25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,981,189 to Wilder. Claims 18 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Linde in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,029,334 to Ozeki. Claim 25 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rosell in view of Ozeki.

In the present amendment, claim 14 has been amended to add the features of claim 21, which defines that "the rack is fixedly connected to the cylinder in the axial direction. Claim 21 has been canceled. Claim 14 was amended further to delete the limitation that the rack is coupled to said cylinder or said piston rod. Claims 15-17 were also canceled.

The Applicants note that the claims as amended herein correspond to the claims that have been allowed recently in the related European patent application.

In addition, the specification has been amended only to add discussion of relevant prior art.

The Applicants respectfully submit that claim 14 as amended is patentable over the cited references. All of the references cited in the outstanding Office Action in support of the rejections under Section 102 (Linde, Wilder, Rosell and Buchan) disclose rack and pinion steering systems in which the rack is connected with the piston rod of a parallel piston/cylinder-device. None of the cited references discloses or suggests that the rack is connected to the cylinder, as specifically defined in amended claim 14. This design enables a very stiff and compact steering device construction. Since these two different structures represent two alternatives with no third possibility, these designs are mutually exclusive. Further, one skilled in the relevant art, therefore, could not be led to the present invention as defined in claim 1 by the teachings of the cited references.

The application in its amended state is believed to be in condition for allowance. Action to this end is courteously solicited. However, should the Examiner have any comments or suggestions, or wish to discuss the merits of the application, the undersigned would very much welcome a telephone call in order to expedite placement of the application into condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



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